4 March 2009

Australian Health Ministers’ Conference

Northern Territory Health Minister, Kon Vatskalis, travels to Melbourne today to join his state and territory colleagues at the Australian Health Ministers’ Conference.

The Minister said a number of issues important to the health of Territorians will be discussed at tomorrow’s ministerial council including elective surgery.

“The Federal Government committed $5.3 million to the Northern Territory for an additional 500 procedures to be performed as part of Stage 1 of its Elective Surgery Waiting List (ESWL) Reduction Plan,” said Mr Vatskalis.

“I’m pleased to report we exceeded our commitment by 28% performing an additional 640 procedures in 2008.

“A further $2.1 million in Stage 2 of the Plan has been allocated to the Territory to implement infrastructure developments to sustain the increased effort.

“The Territory is certainly setting a benchmark for the other states and territories with the blitzes and I look forward to negotiating our share of the $300 million available as part of Stage 3 of the Plan.”

Mr Vatskalis will also meet with Federal Health Minister, Nicola Roxon, to discuss the Palmerston Super Clinic.

“Stage 1 of the Palmerston Super Clinic – the Palmerston Urgent Care After-Hours Service – commenced on 15 December 2008 and is now seeing an average of 32 patients every night,” he said.

“I will be discussing plans for Stage 2 with Minister Roxon which will involve the development of further buildings on the current site for a range of specialist outreach outpatient and integrated health services.”

Contact for media queries: Nikola Lekias 0438323660